



How I Feed My Family on \$80 A Month

By: CHRISTIAN HOMEKEEPER

In this eBook, I will be explaining how I do the meal planning for my family of 3. I will try and make it easy to understand, but if you still have questions feel free to email me:

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Stocking Your Pantry

The first step is to stock your pantry. Things that I have stocked up in our pantry are items such as:

- Flour (pastry, bread, etc)
- Oats
- Beans (all different varieties)
- Powdered Milk
- Honey
- Condiments (mustard, ketchup, etc)
- Canned Goods
- Peanut Butter
- Spices

That isn't all that is in my pantry but those items should give you an idea. A well stocked pantry is your key to success!

Below you will see photos of my pantry.





When we moved from Alaska to Washington a year and a half ago, we had to start all over again with stocking up our pantry. We used close to \$400 to stock our pantry and are still using some items from that stock up! I put my flours, sugars, and other items in canisters with gamma-sealed lids to ensure airtight quality, and I recommend them to anyone.

I bought mine here:

Pails/Buckets:

<http://www.azurestandard.com/products/index.php?mode=detail&pid=NF092&search=1&page=&txtKeywords=pail&fav=1>

Lids:

<http://www.azurestandard.com/products/index.php?mode=detail&pid=NF094&search=1&page=&txtKeywords=gamma&fav=1>

You can see my containers below.



Purchase a Freezer

I think everyone should own a separate freezer from the one that comes with the basic refrigerator. I have a small one because my family doesn't eat a lot of meat. When you find meats on a special sale that can't be beat, you will have room to store them!

I buy berries in bulk and freeze those. I also freeze my bread products I make, so having freezer space allows so many options in your meal planning.



Make

This section of the ebook will be covering items that I make instead of buy! you will be amazed at how much money you will start saving, once you make some of your own bread products and snacks! The savings are substantial, at least for my family and they are definitely the healthier option.

Let's start with bread. The initial cost for the equipment will be worth it because if you purchase a good mixer, it lasts 20 years on average! I bought a Bosch mixer and I love it because it kneads the bread quicker than the other brands, taking only 4-6 minutes.

For recipes, you can search online and you will find MANY different recipes to fit your tastes. Our family prefers whole wheat bread made with olive oil and honey.

Your

Own





One of the bread products that I make monthly is bagels. I will make a large batch and bag half to freeze and the other half we use the first part of the month. I use a whole wheat bagel recipe and it is so easy that once you start making your own, you will wonder WHY you didn't start sooner.

You can do a lot of things with bagels and some of my favorites are:

Egg and cheese breakfast bagel

Cream cheese bagel

Jam bagel

Ham and cheese bagel

Tomato bagel

Buttered and toated bagel

THE Scent OF BAKING



PIZZA

The average American family loves to eat pizza and usually its weekly! Instead of ordering out and spending \$20 or so, how about making your own? I make my own pizza and use whole wheat crust and homemade sauce and my family loves it!



Making your own pizza sauce is easy and I make a large batch and then freeze 3/4th's of it and keep the rest in the refrigerator for that week when I make pizza.



When I need to use some sauce from the freezer, I just put it in the microsave to defrost and then top my pizza and the oven heats it the rest of the way!

We normally just eat pepperoni as our topping and lots of cheese. So I make sure to get pepperoni when it is on sale and most of the time I get a large pack at Walmart for \$1.50 which lasts 2-3 pizzas usually.

With cheese, I buy it in bulk packages because we usually go through one of those a month!

Another staple in my family is pancakes. I make mine with whole wheat flour and as with the other bread products, I make a large batch once a month and freeze them. As you can see in the photo below, I put them in sealable bags and usually put 2 in each bag, sometimes 3. Then I stack them in the freezer.

Along comes morning time and I need something quick without much preparation. So I take out a few packages of the pancakes and either pop them in the toaster or microwave them and top with syrup and VOILA, instant breakfast.

All it takes is one day a month to bake large batches of your family's staple items and not only will that save you TIME, it will also save you MONEY!

Pancakes





Granola Bars

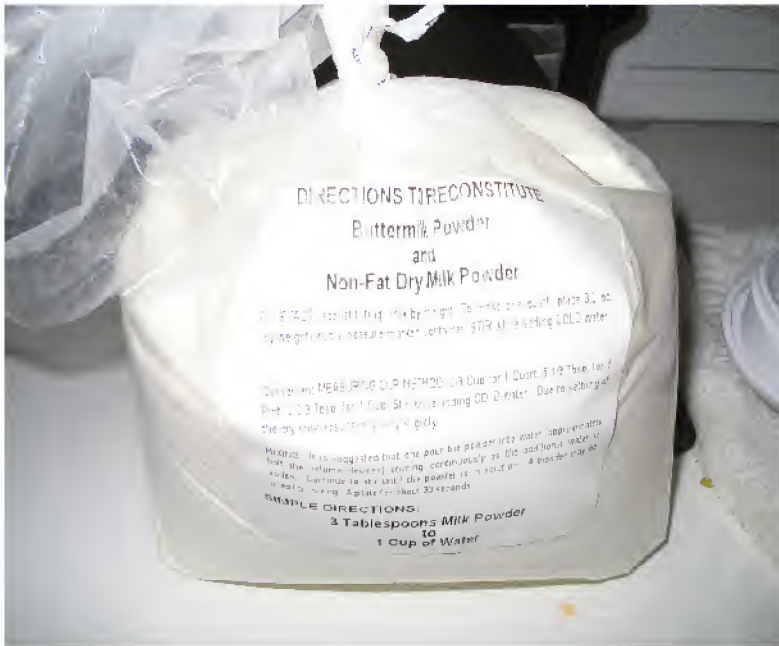
My family loves granola bars for a snack, so this is another one of our staples. They are so easy to make and less expensive than buying boxes of these at the store, unless of course you have a good coupon deal!

I make a large batch and then cut them in individual bars and wrap in plastic wrap. Makes a quick snack and I use healthy ingredients, such as oats and you can even add some flax seed meal to your bars for extra nutrition and fiber!

Milk

Most families use milk for drinking and baking with. With the increased dairy prices you can either stock up on sales and freeze the milk or you can use powdered milk and make your own, which is what I do. I also buy soymilk and like the fact that it lasts unopened for so long and then once you open it can last up to 10 days, unlike regular milk.

I buy powdered milk in bulk and then all you have to do is mix with water and I do this in a blender as you can see in the photos.





Jam

Making your own jam is EASY! You don't have to go through the canning process but rather you can freeze your jam and that is what I do. You will need whatever fruit you are making your jam with. I use strawberries that I buy in bulk slabs that I have in my freezer. Then you will need to buy some freezer jam containers and a packet or two of pectin. I buy a 2-pack because I make 2 batches usually.





Open a packet of the pectin and mix it with the desired amount of sugar that you want or you can go by the package directions and use that amount.

Then, take 4 cups of your fruit and blend it well to a nice consistency as shown below.

Then mix the fruit and pectin/sugar mix together.





Now fill your containers! Seriously that is IT and you now are wondering WHY you didn't do this before.

After filling them, put the lids on and freeze and be sure to save one for the refrigerator for your bagels or biscuits in the mornings.

You can buy Pomona Pectin, which doesn't require sugar, to make sugar-free jam.



Meal Planning 101

First and foremost before you start planning your meals for your family, I recommend PRAYER! God can help with even the smallest budget and things just work out when you let God give you wisdom on feeding your family.

Next, start with an inventory of what you have in your freezer, pantry and refrigerator. I use my own forms for this but you can print free ones online here:

<http://organizedhome.com/printable-planner-forms/home-management/household-notebook>

Once you know what you have on hand, then begin to go through recipes and find what you can make for a month utilizing what you have. Also plan what your family would like for breakfast, lunch and snacks along with dinners and don't forget desserts!

This will take time and brainstorming, but with God helping you, you can do this!



My Family's Menu

This is a sample menu of our monthly menu choices. The items in blue can be found on my recipe blog.



Breakfast

- Pancakes, syrup, eggs
- Cereal, milk, almonds
- Bagel, cream cheese, tomato
- Scrambled egg with egg whites, veggies, toast
- Scone, fruit or jam, cheese or egg
- Muffin, cheese or egg
- Oatmeal, eggs and/or almonds
- Scrambled tofu, veggies
- Shakes
- French Toast

Lunch

- Peanut butter and jelly sandwich, milk
- Peanut butter and banana sandwich, milk
- Egg salad sandwich
- Leftovers
- Bean burritos
- Meat and cheese sandwich

Dinner

- Black bean Spaghetti with garlic toast or cheese bread
- Pinto beans (with homemade sauce) and [cornbread](#)
- Black bean burritos, homemade tortillas
- Tomato soup with grilled cheese sandwich
- [Split pea soup](#), sandwiches
- Navy bean soup, sandwiches or honey muffins
- Baked salmon, brown rice and broccoli
- Homemade pizza with toppings
- Eggplant, Spinach and Tofu Lasagna
- Beans and rice with cheese

Snacks

- Nachos
- Yogurt, almonds
- Peanut butter on homemade bread, milk
- Cereal, milk
- Fruit, hardboiled egg
- Popcorn, cheese or almonds
- Shakes

Desserts

- Peanut butter and oats cookies
- Chocolate chip cookies
- Sugar cookies
- All kinds of cookies lol
- Tofu pie
- Strawberry pie
- Fudge brownies
- Coffee cakes
- [Apple Crisp](#)

After you have chosen the recipes, you will need to take a calendar and plan meals out for 30 days. We use leftovers, so I normally only need to plan 12-16 meals a month.

Now you will you need to make a list of the ingredients you will need for the month for breakfast all the way to dinners and snacks.

There are some items I buy on a weekly or bi-weekly basis, such as fruits and vegetables. However most of my vegetables are frozen, but I do buy fresh lettuce and spinach and tomatoes. Then for fruit I buy fresh bananas and apples.

Once you have planned it all out, then you do your shopping trip. I normally buy all my items at Wal-mart. We had a new store open in our area called, WinCo and after comparing prices I have found that a lot of the groceries items are cheaper than Wal-mart and I may do my monthly shopping at WinCo from now on. They also sell things in bulk for when I need to stock up.

I just recently started using coupons but I found I actually spent MORE money a month because I was not only buying things I needed, but I was buying things I didn't need and don't normally buy, just because they were a good deal with a coupon. It also caused more trips to the store and more gas used! You can do it without coupons and without going from store to store to store!

I also am not into the whole warehouse club thing, unless you have a very large family or entertain often.

It takes a lot of planning and brainstorming, but think of all the money you will save and have leftover to spend on something you WANT or to save for the future!





That is all there is to it! If I can do it, so you can you. Even at the most when my family ate more processed, packaged foods and meat at most meals, I was able to stay under \$120.

If you have any questions or need help with anything, email me:

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Also visit my Homekeeping blog:

<http://christianhomekeeper.blogspot.com>

Happy Savings!!